HOUSEHOLD NOTES AND QUERIES

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HOUSEHOLD

NOTES AND QUERIES

A FAMILY REFERENCE BOOK

8009-159

BY

THE WISE BLACKBIRD

BOSTON
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY
FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

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Household Notes and Queries.

I.

JENNIE VILAS writes, "I ink my fingers every time I write. It is a bad habit, and my aunt is annoyed by it. Please tell me some way to cure myself." It is an untidy trick, but one that is avoided by giving a little thought to the implements you write with. Look at the book-keepers in stores, who write all day, and yet keep their hands, cuffs and ledgers faultless, so that a white hand, with a fresh cuff and a page like copperplate, seem ordered in a set together. Ink-spots are the signatures of carelessness. Have a wide-mouthed inkstand with only half an inch of ink in it, and fill often. You can't dip a pen hastily in a deep ink-bottle without smearing the holder and your hands. The little earthen pots which Liebig's extract comes in, make good inkstands in want of anything better, and, with a sprig of flowers or other device in colors painted or pasted on, make pretty holders for ink, matches and crayons. To

keep your page neat in writing, have a sheet of blotting-paper large enough to cover it, and keep it just below the line you are writing, to rest your hand upon. By this means, copyists and draughtsmen keep their large pages fresh and undimmed.

LILY, aged eight, thoughtfully asks if there is no use to be made of wild roses, which grow in such myriads on low shores and wet lands. Yes: their petals yield the finest perfume, and you want to gather them after the dew is dry, and shut their pink leaves, before they wilt, into thin muslin bags, baste up the open end and lay these large sachets away under the clothes in drawers, or in writing-tables. Clean three-cent salt-bags will answer, but you want dozens of loosely filled bags to strew about. Save all the rose-petals of any kind you can get; their scent is more delicate than any prepared perfume. Girls should save bunches of sweet garden clover, and of vernal grass, both of which keep their delicious sweetness for years, and fill one's room with haunting breaths of lost summers. Part of our duty to keep our corner of the world sweet and lovely is fulfilled in such ways; for the fragrance of refreshing flowers and

plants is not only pleasant, but healthy, as it purifies the air and kills the germs of disease. So gather the heads of vernal grass which bloom a second time in the late season, and the green leaves of the tall spiked garden clover, the lemon verbena, whose scent is so good for headaches, and of rose geranium, and let the cheap cologne and perfumes with fancy names go by.

To take out ink-stains, stretch the part stained smoothly over a bit of board to keep the ink from spreading. Wash with a sponge, and rub dry as possible, and scrape gently with a dull knife. Most of the ink will come out, and what is left will yield to lemon juice and salt rubbed on the spot. Leave this on a few minutes in the sun, wash off, and restore the color by wetting with diluted ammonia, half a teaspoonful in a teacup of water.

II.

SARAH GARDINER L. asks very pitifully if the Wise Blackbird can help her about keeping her dress in order; for her cruel mamma and aunts insist that she shall look like a lady and take care of her things herself, as she is twelve years old; and brushing dresses and polishing boots is what she *detests*. That is a strong word to use for such a common and essential thing. What, detest the care to be spotless as a lily, sweet and fresh as lavender, a blessing to those who see her, a part of all fair and comely scenes, instead of something discordant, marring them? I refuse to believe it of any girl who reads this. Now let the Wise Blackbird drop a bit of wisdom in your ears which will take the harshness out of every disagreeable duty in life. In Dr. John Todd's "Letters to a Daughter," he wrote, "Whatever

one does well, she is sure to do easily," and words to the effect that what one goes at thoroughly, ceases to be disagreeable. I knew a girl of twenty years ago who took these words into her heart, and they have made work the pleasure of her life. All the careless people who watch her, cry out at the trouble she takes with everything she does; but they are very apt to say, after all is through, "You have such an *easy* way of turning off things, and things always stay done for you." Of course they do. Thorough is the Saxon for through, and anything that is thoroughly done is through with. It is a queer paradox, that if you try to do things easily, to shirk and slur them over, you will always find it hard to get along; while if you put all sorts of pains into your work, and never think how easily it can be done, but how well it can be, you find it growing easier day by day. At last everything seems to come right to your hand, and all things conspire to help you. A girl of twelve should know how to mend nicely both stockings and clothes, and to cut and make most articles she wears. There are plenty of girls who can do this now, but every girl ought to do it. A small

book might be written on the care of clothes, but I will only tell you a few labor-saving hints:

Instead of brushing the dust from a gown, or the mud from a drabbled flounce, inch by inch, take your dress out on clean short grass, after the dew is off, and holding by the shoulders, sweep and beat it against the sward, turning so that all sides of the skirt will touch the ground. The grass acts as a fine soft brush, taking out dust, and freshening every part, while it does not wear dresses as a hair-brush or whisk-broom does. Lawn dresses and grenadines are refreshed safely in this way, when a brush would fray them. The flounces and plaitings of silk are thoroughly dusted, and the hems of drabbled water-proof cloaks are cleansed without the disagreeable need of touching them with the hands. I never saw the lightest frock stained or worn in the least by grass.

Pour boiling water through fruit-stains until they disappear, holding the spot stretched firmly. Carry a needle threaded with cotton or silk, to match your dress, and you are ready for accidents. Darn thread gloves, which are always dropping stitches like Jacob's-ladders, with ravellings of old gloves. In

the present fashion of wearing mittens you can prolong the usefulness of long-wristed gloves when the finger-tips wear out, by cutting them off evenly at the lower joint, hemming the edges with ravellings, and pressing them with a hot iron, when you have a neat pair of Nell Gwynne gloves.

RORY. "Won't you tell us the meaning of postage-stamps when put on upside down, sideways or across; I have been told each of these ways is significant." Silly people have invented a code of signals by postage stamps, but only very vulgar, ignorant persons who have nothing else to occupy their minds, ever think of such a paltry concern; and no paper which has any respect for the brains of its subscribers will publish it.

CORNELIUS V. H. "What were coats of arms used for?" To distinguish the different chiefs or lords and their followers in battle and abroad, before the common people had learned to read. They were necessary as the uniforms and badges are now to distinguish the various regiments and State officers. The figures of lions, dragons, eagles, and other creatures, the rose, lily and palm, could be recognized when embroidered on the sur coat

or garment worn above the armor to protect it from tarnishing, and soldiers could know at a glance when they met to what duke or prince they belonged. At first only sovereigns used these distinctions; afterward all families of noble birth chose badges and figured shields, every design on which was a sign of some trait of which they were proud, their loyalty, courage or ambition. Or the figures recalled some notable event in the fortunes of the family, as the spider, which Robert Bruce watched mending its web in the cave while he was hiding from his enemies, was placed in the royal arms after he became King of Scotland.

BILLY. To make a spangled motto for Christmas, cut the letters out of stiff paper or pasteboard, wash them with weak glue or thick gum, and when sticky-damp, sprinkle with what house-painters call "brocades," which are scales of gilt metal, bronze or silver of different qualities of coarseness. These cost from ten to twenty-five cents an ounce, and you would want perhaps six ounces for a motto of ten words. "Flitters," or fine shavings of gilt or silver paper for the same purpose, are forty-five cents an ounce.

III.

PIP. "How can I keep fleas off a little fleecy dog?" Do not use carbolic soap on young or tender dogs: it burns their skin. I knew a beautiful little spaniel nearly killed by it. Rub dry sulphur into the hair, or wet it with camphor, and wash in warm water with fifteen drops carbolic acid to the quart, twice a week; wipe dry and comb. Three or four applications will drive the insects away, and they can be kept away by giving the dog pine shavings for bedding. You should comb all large dogs with a curry-comb once a week. Dog-fanciers use a common horn comb and stiff brush for their terriers and spaniels.

LAURA. "How shall I keep knitting-yarn from staining my hands in working?" Always before knitting throw the skein of yarn into a basin of cold

water with a tablespoonful of alum dissolved in it. Let the yarn stand ten minutes to shrink it and set the color, then shake the water out without wringing, and hang in the sun and wind to dry.

KATE AND WILLIE of Milwaukee want suggestions for a juvenile party from seven to ten o'clock P. M. A magic lantern, conjuring tricks by a clever papa or uncle, Punch and Judy, home-made, are favorite entertainments. In cities a professional conjurer is often engaged to show his tricks at private parties, at terms about ten dollars an hour, or evening, if it is preferred that he should exhibit at intervals between other games. It is great fun to have an older friend come in disguise of a tramp or gypsy woman during the evening, to beg or tell fortunes.

FRANCE JORDAN can best improve her memory by writing down what she wishes to remember, whether a message or passage to learn, reading it slowly aloud three or more times, or writing it three times over, *then* destroying the paper, and depending on her mind. A few months of such practice will improve the memory wonderfully. To remember a poem, study and repeat, stanza after stanza, morning, noon

and night, going over what you have learned from the first each time.

TEDDIE has been chosen to give the teacher of his class a fine writing-desk as a birthday gift from her pupils, and wishes I would write him a presentation speech. Dear Teddie, the bore of receiving presents is that people, large and small, insist on making occasions and speeches about them. The speech takes away the pleasure of the time for the persons most concerned — the unlucky wight who has to make it and wonders how he shall get through it, and the person complimented, who has to say something charming to the surprise, without six weeks to prepare for it as the first speaker has. The best model of the sort I ever knew was this from a boy who was chosen to present a teacher with a gold watch from her school: "Dear Miss Raeburn: The scholars you have helped and worked over, want you to carry this watch to remember them as they will long and gratefully remember you." Then the teacher made the same response which M. Outry, the French Minister, made to the attentions of the Brown University students at Providence, complimenting the visit-

ing French officers. No, hers was longer by three words. She said with a happy smile and rather a glistening eye, "Dear boys and girls—thanks!"

LIONEL asks if a permit is needed to visit the room of either branch of the General Assembly, and if so how he can get one. As the General Assembly is the governing body of a free and republican State, no permit is needed to visit the galleries of either house. Please remark that one of the distinctions between a republic and a monarchical country is that the people of the former have a right to visit its national and state capitals to see how public business is carried on.

IV.

BILLY BUTTON. "How shall I make my old shabby trunk mother gave me to keep my clothes in, look better?" Soak off all express labels first, by laying wet cloths over them till they will peel off, glue down all torn places in the covering with the strongest glue, wash off any grease or mud with hot soda water, rinsing well, then paint with "edge blacking" from the shoemaker's, if it is a leather trunk, and varnish with the black varnish stove dealers use for grates. After it is dry, rub the nail heads bright with sandpaper, and polish with pumice stone in powder. Line the trunk with glazed cambric, put on with thick rye paste, well boiled, with a little glue in it.

LAURA. "Is there such a stitch in embroidery as 'captivity' stitch, and what gives it its name?" The

captivity stitch known to embroiderers and lace fanciers is one of the forty or fifty different stitches used in needlework, and was devised by a captive lady of rank to beguile the tedious hours of imprisonment. It is much like double crochet, and is used in filling large outlines and heads of flowers.

POLYANTHUS. "I live at a distance from any art school, and would like to know what sort of clay is used in modelling, for I have often felt I should like to try to make figures in it." The modelling clays used in studios are prepared by mixing with finely ground and sifted sand or powdered stone ware. Nearly all clays need such mixture to make them work smoothly, and some kinds are so sticky and greasy that they cannot be handled at all. If you are near a brick-kiln, you will find the finer clays used in brick-making answer well. The best will be clays from a pottery, ready mixed. Blue clay, if not too sticky, can be mixed with very fine sifted sand, and works well. All clay is sticky when first wet, and should stand till it is like putty throughout, and then be well kneaded before moulding. The clays in different parts of the country differ in color, but no

matter whether your clay is red, buff, yellow or gray, if it moulds well; warm reddish or pale drab shades only add to the richness of the work. Make the best of what comes to hand.

FLORENCE RIDLEY. "When was wall-paper first used? Was it in England?" No, my dear, that inventive people the Chinese first made wall-paper in square blocks, stamped to imitate embossed leather, and the Dutch imported such papers about the last of the sixteenth century. They began to copy the Chinese papers about 1640. 2. "Does air pass through the walls of a well-built house? My brother says it does, but I don't see how it can be, for houses are built to keep out the air." I am glad to see boys and girls ask such questions, it shows they think about things of some use. Besides, it is a very good exercise for the mind to think at all, and not to take everything for granted. Brick, stone, plaster and wood — all building materials — are more or less porous, and the air passes through any surface not glazed or covered with fresh oil paint, so that a slight ventilation is all the time going on through the walls of our houses, which I suppose accounts for the fact

that people are not oftener suffocated in close rooms. In a strong wind you can feel the faint current of air through a brick wall on the side from which the wind blows. Or you can blow out a candle through a Philadelphia brick or block of sandstone. But how many of you can tell me how this is done?

BILLY AND ROB. "Please tell us an easy way for boys to make some money." It is a little curious that over thirty letters are at hand asking the very same question; from which it is fair to conclude that a good many people are interested in the same subject. If I should tell at once all the ways I know of in which people are making money, I am afraid the publishers would have trouble in printing editions of the book for all who would want them. But I will promise now and then to pick up some new way in which boys and girls can make money by their own labor. And I promise you they will be ways which mean work, and which will be of use to others. Not poor little tricks to ask people for their money in exchange for something of really no value, which is only a kind of beggary at best. Shall I tell you of a boy who wanted money very badly, and contracted with

all the neighbors to sift and carry away all their coal ashes for the sake of the cinders? The folks were very glad to get rid of their coal ashes and the cinder-heaps which disfigured the back yards, and Fred in his old coat and trousers wheeled away the ashes and sold the cinders at thirty-five cents a bushel, for which price folks were glad to buy them back again, sifted and washed, to keep fires over night. Some of the boys laughed and called him nicknames, but they didn't laugh so much when Fred bought his ten-dollar magic lantern with the proceeds of his screenings. Boys, there is money in bank for some of you — in the ash-bank — but how many of you will find it? Every town I know, and a good many homes I know, are decorated with ash-heaps along the sides of the streets, thrown into the green woody corners and on the banks of streams which ought to be fresh, clean and picturesque places, pleasant to view, instead of refuse-harbors and "free dumps" for the neighborhood. You might find some dollars for yourselves by making use of this rubbish, and earn the thanks of the neighborhood besides.

BELLA BARKER. How shall I kill worms at the

roots of my house-plants, without transplanting? Water with strong salt water poured over the earth, not touching the leaves, or with warm water having twenty-five drops of carbolic acid to the quart. Sea water kills worms in the ground or on plants, but injures delicate foliage.

JENNIE C. has whooping cough, and dislikes to stay at home from her classes, as she is working for a prize. Can I tell her anything to help her? Dr. Mott of New York says that sulphate of quinine, dissolved on the tongue, cured his children in seven days, but you must ask your doctor to prescribe the doses. Both whooping cough and diphtheria are relieved by breathing fumes of a tablespoonful of sulphur, burned on a hot shovel, held a yard or two from the patient, taking care not to choke him by too strong a whiff.

MINNIE wants some good selections for dramatic reading in school, Wednesday afternoons. Don't I remember turning over the leaves of the home library in search of the same readings, and finding Whittier, Bryant, "The English Poets," the "Ladies' Wreath" of poetry, and the English classics, all too poor to

furnish one theme for the Wednesday afternoon exercises! You want something fresh, I suppose, and for that it is best to search the magazines and weekly papers. At a late commencement of Chauncy Hall School — one of the most admired in the country — where reading is made an accomplishment as it should be, most of the selections were from newspapers and magazines of the same year. Look through the *Wide Awake*, *Harper*, and *Century's* department of Bric-à-brac, especially. Remember that pointed or humorous pieces are more liked in general than sentimental ones, but bear in mind that a passage not striking in itself, may be so read, with just, varied and natural expression, as to be interesting and affecting. If this advice isn't what you want, write again, saying how old you are, and I will make a list of special readings for you. It is very pleasant to have the requests come fluttering in, like November leaves.

EDNA AND JOE have caught the collecting fever, but the trouble is they don't know where to begin. "Do I advise them to collect postage stamps, minerals, cards, or samples of earths from different States,

or to get up a case of birds' eggs. Isn't it a good plan to make collections?" Depends on what the collections are. Collecting for the sake of collecting, to have something somebody else has not, or to have a thousand or two uninteresting specimens is a nuisance, not worth the while except as it keeps one from petty larceny, backbiting, arson and such depraved tricks. Frequently, with postage stamps, when not made a means toward the study of history and geography, no one cares less for the collection in a short time than its owner. Cases of little bits of stones and vials of earth from all the States in the Union, are too trivial to illustrate anything — as the range of minerals in each State is too wide to be represented in any such way. I have spent a year in wondering at the Cincinnati teacher, who could deliberately set his boys collecting birds' eggs and stuffed birds, and teach them to rob nests and kill happy creatures with blow guns or pocket pistols, to fill scholars' cases. Except for large scientific collections, it is most unnecessary cruelty to kill birds and rob their nests to gratify a collector's vanity. Rather, while young, make the beginning of col-

lections which will grow in interest through life. Collections of autumn leaves of singular beauty, or leaves of rare trees, mounted singly, have always an interest; sections of different woods, not less than six inches square, are of lively interest while collecting, and can be made into a parquet mantle, or window seat, when complete. But the most valuable of all are collections of pictures, large and small, wood or steel engravings, good, bad and indifferent, if the subject is interesting. As they gather you assort them by classes, heads of public men and women, old worthies, foreign and ancient costumes, noted towns, great events, animals, etc. You do not know what interest such a collection has. For instance, a boy may have all the presidents, all the modern inventors, large guns, war-ships, maps of the seats of modern war, and heroes of each war, cut from the weekly papers, to which the arrangement gives double value, and such a scrap-book is always excellent for reference. Take old school-books and interleave them with such pictures as you find illustrating the subjects. This is a favorite occupation of wealthy collectors, but you can have just as

much fun out of it. Collections of figured chintzes and calicoes to show the patterns of each season will be highly interesting the older they grow. Collections of initial letters, or end-pieces from old books are useful to artists, and so are all specimens of ornamented borders or headings. Collect insects if you like, for you can kill them instantly and painlessly with ether. Collect flowers for herbariums, and locks of hair, if you like, not sentimentally, but to show the endless variety of fineness and shades on human heads. Collect samples of as many different shades of each color in silk, kid, muslin, or any fine stuff as you can, and get the fashionable name for each. Such collections educate one, and have an interest for manufacturers and artists in after life, while they always have a money value not dependent on the caprice of the moment.

V.

CARRIE sends a neat page from her drawing-book, and wishes to know if I think it advisable for her to study to be an artist. It is early to say that, but Carrie, and all readers who like to draw, can practise till they gain such skill that they can *correctly draw common objects*, which is the first step toward being an artist, and is more valuable than great talent without this correctness. When you can draw your own chair or work-basket so that the sketch looks just like them, with the nicks and curves and the air of familiar objects, then it will be time for you to think whether it is best for you to devote your life to art.

DOSSIE. "How shall I mend a carved photograph frame, also a black-walnut chair, which we children broke one night jumping around?" Buy five cents' worth of brown glue, choosing clean pieces which do

not smell of decayed matter, cover with cold water over night, and boil to a thick syrup. Have the broken surfaces perfectly clean from dust or grease, or the glue will not stick. Blow or brush the dust off; if soiled with handling, dip the ends in strong solution of washing soda, and brush clean. Then heat both parts to be joined, hot as possible without scorching, brush each while smoking hot with boiling glue, or dip the ends in the glue two or three minutes to absorb as much as possible. Fit the broken parts perfectly, wipe off the glue outside, tie tightly, and leave in a dry warm place three days or a week. Better have a sixpenny pair of clamps, which screw the pieces together tightly, and are useful in other sorts of juvenile work. When dry, wipe all the glue from the outside with a moist cloth, or rub off with sandpaper, and go over the whole frame with a brush dipped in boiled linseed oil, which improves most carved-wood frames.

ETHEL. You might like the new pincushions made of satin or satine to imitate a mattress, with square-bound edges and tufting done with tiny buttons or gold beads. Dark red-brown, wine color,

peacock, or crimson are the best colors to last.

BROWN JOSIE. It is the best kind of an idea to keep a diary, only don't make it a record of your own thoughts and feelings, but rather of events in the family, and interesting things which come in your notice. Your feelings and ideas will alter as you grow older, till a record of them is very embarrassing to look over. But you will like by and by to have something to remind you just when you got the big Newfoundland, or when the new teacher came, and when the corner house took fire and frightened all the family, and when the boys went off on their first hunt, or the eclipse took place, or the cousins died of diphtheria, or the new minister was married. Time will come when you will find it pleasant to fix your recollections of these incidents which were the events of early days. You will want to remember many things which happened last year, in 1881 — for instance, the great comet which made August nights so lovely, with its shafts of light against the dark soft blue ; the strange aurora of the autumn, which some old-fashioned people imagine foretells a great war ; and, most notable of all, " the yellow day " of

the northeastern States, which none of those who saw it ever will forget. But by and by you will want something to refer to which will give you the exact date and remind you how the hens went to roost and the currant-worms seemed bewildered and left the bushes, and you couldn't see to read *Robinson Crusoe* in-doors. Keep a diary, by all means, writing in it not every day, but as often as there is anything interesting to put down. By the way, who can write an interesting account of that "yellow day" as it appeared in Maine, also in New Hampshire, as well as in the Lake George region, and so on? Each telling when the strange appearance was first noticed in the day, and anything remarkable which came under his *own* knowledge. And Southern readers might give some account of the great storm off the Florida and Georgia coast August, '81, which was the wildest storm known by seamen since the great gale of 1801. Write briefly, and be sure of your facts, and you can't fail to add interest to your own observations and those of others.

REDFORD. You want the promise kept of telling boys and girls how to make an honest penny. Very

well. I shall tell you of the basket business, which many boys of good family around Boston have taken up. A basket is stocked with needles, thread, tapes and "findings" for the work-table in general, and the boys go from door to door selling them Saturdays out of school. I don't think it is fair for boys who have fathers able to support them and give them all they need, to go into any such business, to the injury of regular dealers and merchants who have families to care for and who give employment to other persons; but there is a chance to supply little nice things not kept at the shops, which people are glad to get, and which will not interfere with any other business. It is a great thing to feel that nobody has a smaller slice of the cake because you have had yours. *Nice* sewing-silk, nice Providence yarn, curtain cord and tassels, good cheap toilet soap, extra-good pins and needles, milliners' needles, fine darners, very coarse tape-needles, carpet thread of the *best* quality, heel and knee protectors for children, to save the wear of trousers and stockings, are things not found at shops in general, and which meet a ready sale at good profits.

VI.

LAURA B. asks how can a girl of ten who goes to school earn money? If she has good parents to supply her with what a little girl needs, and studies out of school as most children do nowadays, and helps her mother as all girls ought, she will not have much time to earn or think of money. She should not attempt any work which will keep her sitting in the house, for she will need all the fresh air and exercise she can get out of school. Raising plants and fowls is the best pursuit for you, beginning with some carnations and geranium slips in the window, and half a dozen hens in the back yard. But remember, to succeed in anything, you must give it steady care, feed and water the chickens when you had rather be reading a new story, or watering and tending the plants when you want to play with other

girls. You will need to study and read about plants and fowls to learn how to raise them and the best part of the business will not be the trifle of money you will earn, but the experience and knowledge of things you will gain.

FRANK L. W. "Would you please tell me how I could become a midshipman and enter the naval academy at Annapolis, and what would be required of me?" Would I? Under what circumstances? Would and could imply some condition; and when used as a question, are correctly followed by the word if, and there is no if about the Blackbird's answering. Say, *Will* you tell me how I *can* do so and so. To enter the classes of cadet midshipmen, you must be between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, of good moral standing and sound health, and pass a satisfactory examination in arithmetic, grammar, geography, reading, writing and spelling. You must apply with such recommendations from influential friends as you can secure, to the congressman from your district, each representative having the right to nominate one candidate. You will find the routine very strict, and that learning to fill a place in the United

States service is a very different thing from grammar-school discipline. There will be some rough hazing to undergo, unless customs have changed at Annapolis lately. How would you like being held out of a fourth-story window by the neck and heels by a few fellows no stronger than yourself, as one newcomer was a very few years since? As usual, the midshipmen make the hardest of their position for each other. Entering the navy is no holiday work; but the discipline is what every boy would be better for,

CONSTANCE "is ten years old, and lives in a hill town in Vermont where wood is plenty and no one burns coal," so she can't sift cinders, and wants to know how she can make money. Why, the wooded hill country is just the place for treasures of creeping pine, princess pine, arbutus, laurel and mitchella, which keep green under the snow, and townspeople like to have these hardy plants which are beautiful in pots and baskets. Such things are sold on the street in Boston all winter long, and children can dispose of them in every large town or village. Gather the running pine and other vines by the yard

or half yard, and pack the roots in damp wood moss. Take up the other plants without disturbing the roots or shaking the earth loose about them; have plenty of soil, and place them in half-pint strawberry baskets or birch baskets, with moss to hide the roots. Wash the leaves clean with the spray from a watering-pot, and florists are very likely to take them to sell at a small price. A quart basket with a fine wild fern, a clump of hepatica and some mitchella, sells in the city for ten cents. Nice lengths of wild grape-vine and roots trimmed for rustic work, or bundles of small straight cedar branches for nailing on the outside of plant-stands are salable. And I hope you know how to knit, all of you, boys and girls, beginning with wristlets in wool or cotton, to finish off the wrists and ankles of flannel under-garments, and going on to socks and mittens, spreads and blankets.

VII.

A LILLIE. "Please tell me how I can keep my hands nice and white doing housework." *Only* by wearing thick kid or castor gloves about sweeping and chamber work, by using a dish-mop to wash dishes, and a wire "burnisher" with handle to clean kettles, wiping all tin and stove ware with a coarse dry towel instead of wringing a dish-cloth a dozen times out of the water. After using potash, soda or strong soap wash the hands in vinegar and water, a table-spoonful of acid to a pint of water. Never wash your hands in cold water, use pumice stone disks which come for the purpose, to remove roughness, and be careful to have nice soap for the hands, and a brush. You need nothing expensive; white Marseilles soap at fifteen cents a pound, or Queen Bath soap or the Cold Water soaps are good for common

hand or bath soaps, and keep the skin soft. Use vaseline, olive oil or nice mutton suet to heal cracked hands.

K. S. "Can you not give us some directions how to pack a trunk? A good many of us will have it to do for ourselves this summer, and I fear few know how to do it scientifically." Line the trunk first with strong manilla paper, dark blue, or buff envelope paper; white injures delicate colored things by the lime used in bleaching. Fold it neatly at the corners, as in covering a book, clip and paste it slightly to keep in place. Put books in the bottom, then boxes, underclothing, sheets and towels which are always convenient in boarding, the dresses either in trays or above other things. Have all shoes and rubbers very clean, wrap in thin paper separately, then tie pairs together in firm paper very closely. Put nice dresses and shawls in a fine towel, or keep in paste-board dress boxes. Tack three or four broad tapes to the sides of your trunk or tray, and tie across the contents to keep them from tossing. Fold everything very smoothly, and pack singly, without crowding, filling the crevices with stockings, towels, or work which may

be rolled tightly. Have all laces, ribbons and ornaments in separate boxes, tied with tape which does not cut the boxes. Fill the crowns of bonnets and hats with tissue paper or light articles which keep them from crushing, wrap the outside in a soft veil or plenty of thin paper and pack closely round to prevent shaking. Have all toilet articles together, all fancy work, all writing materials, and the dress you will first need, so packed as to come first at hand. Nice lace keeps best in a soft, quilted wrapper, lined with thin silk or satin, which allows it to go without folding. Take plenty of small wares, thread, pins, invisible hair nets to keep the front hair from losing its crimp. Take a shot-bag, a toilet-bag of crash to hang over the wash-stand, a large colored bag for soiled clothes, a scrap-bag and hair-receiver which will greatly aid in keeping a small room tidy, also a tin medicine box with bottles rolled separately in cotton wadding, and then tied in paper, a layer of cotton under and another over them. Bottles can be carried in this way any distance. Take vaseline, carbolic acid to keep away mosquitoes, gum camphor, Jamaica ginger, a few seidlitz powders, and quinine pills, plenty of ammonia,

lavender water, and chloroform for toothaches and for taking spots out of silk. You can get such things of course, but the trouble of getting them, and of being without them just when wanted, will soon teach one that it is best to be prepared with them. Better carry a medicine box six years unopened, than to be caught with a raging toothache, a bee-sting, an ink spot, or find yourself in the same house with typhoid fever, without remedies. Carry ground mustard for poultices, a paper of baking soda, which is sovereign for burns, scalds and stings, to avoid calling up a whole house to get either of these trifling things. A spirit-lamp, and a hollow, nickel-plated iron for pressing muslins and laces, heated by the lamp, are great conveniences.

VIII.

JESSIE K. "Will you tell me how to keep a little balcony on the northeast side of the house filled with flowers this summer; what to plant and when?" You will have to start plants in a warmer summer exposure, in boxes at south windows, or, better, depend on plants from the nurseries. Young, strong plants, not yet in bloom, are not expensive, and you can get a fine selection from the florist's each month. Ivies grow well in partly shaded exposure like yours; a Virginia creeper will be the best screen you can have, with early pansies, violets and lily-of-the-valley to lead off, heliotrope, vinca, perpetual roses, mignonette and nigella through the season from successive sowings or cuttings. Plant pansies, mignonette, lavender and petunias at once in boxes, and again every two weeks till the

middle of June, to have plants coming in bloom as fast as the first ones drop off. Carnations and verbenas will do well in your balcony in midsummer, when most plants are grateful for shade. Start tuberose bulbs, forget-me-not, ice-plants, thunborgia and ferns in hanging-baskets with evergreen honeysuckle and madeira-vine in pots to hang in masses over the balustrade. Phlox, portulacca, tulips, balsams, geraniums, asters and gladeolus will not do well for your balcony, as they need more sun.

CONSTANCE. "How can I keep little green lice off my plants in winter?" By washing the plants once or twice a week in warm soap-suds, placing the pots in a tub of water on washing-days, sponging the leaves off gently with a soft cloth or sponge, or throwing the water over them with a whisk-broom. Turn up the under side of the leaves and wash the insects off carefully. Also put the plants under a barrel, and smoke them with coarse tobacco-stems laid on a shovelful of coals for half an hour. Sprinkle the plant well afterward.

LILLIE P. H. "Will you tell me how to free rose-bushes from scale-bugs?" Mr. Vick, the florist, advises

washing the plant in strong suds made from soft soap, going over leaves and stem with a soft brush very carefully, and then rinsing the plant with clear lukewarm water. It is easier to prevent scale and green fly by keeping the plant free from dust, well washed once a week, and sprinkled daily.

IX.

AMERICAN EAGLE. (1) "How do animals know their masters so well?" In the same way that you know your friends, by getting used to them. Animals have sight, smell and hearing much keener than yours, and make better use of what sense they have than most boys do. (2) "How do they know their names so well?" By hearing them often, and associating the sound with the food to which it often calls them.

ANXIETY. "We have taken a cottage for the summer, but it is too far to carry furniture, and mother says we shall take only what is absolutely necessary: stove, table, dishes, and beds. It seems to me the house will look so bare and desolate we shall be homesick in a week. How can we make the house more tasteful and comfortable?—for I want my broth-

ers to think it pretty and have a pleasant time." The tendency to over-decoration, which is one of the fine vices of the time, speaks pretty plainly in this appeal, which comes too late for the answer to be of use the present season. However, the advice will keep good till next year. "Anxiety" has found before this that her brothers, if they are real boys, will find any place pleasant in summer where they can have plenty of out-door sport, and lounge comfortably in-doors without asking much finery about the house. For the rest, people who have a pleasing view from their windows, a fresh, cool, clean house, with turf and shade about it, and plenty of wild flowers for the rooms, do not miss the mats and tidies, fancy chairs and bric-a-brac of town. The summer-houses of wealthy people are being simply furnished, often with floors left bare for coolness, and the indispensable furniture. However, you can take sprigged muslin curtains for the windows, photographs mounted to hang without frames, Japanese scrolls, white laced toilet covers for bedrooms, pillow covers and trunk covers of chintz, gay mats for the floor, bright sofa rugs and turkey-red cushions for the veranda seats. The necessary furniture may be

fanciful as you please — rattan rockers, camp-chairs and Shaker chairs, a pretty table or two, faience lamps and colored china for the dining-room.

RUTH. "Will you tell me how to take stains of fruit and medicine out of white linen or cotton?" Fresh stains may be taken out by pouring boiling water through the spot for a long time, or by laying the article wet in very hot sun and keeping it wet two or three days. Leaving things out in a pouring rain will remove many stains. For obstinate cases, dip the spots in Javelle water from the druggist's, using one tablespoonful to a pint of hot water. Wet the spot only, and lay in the sun three minutes. If the spot does not change, dip again and expose to the sun, then rinse in water slightly sour with lemon or vinegar, and in clear water twice, and dry in the sun. The Javelle water must be carefully used, for it will eat holes in cloth and take out the color where a spot falls. Sunshine is the best bleach for fruit stains, and Javelle water for medicine which oxalic acid will not remove. To use the latter, wet the spot, dip into a strong solution of the acid, and lay in the sun, or hold over hot steam a few minutes, rinse in water with a spoonful of

ammonia to the half-gallon, then in plenty of clear water, and finish in the sun.

PUSSIE. "Can you tell me any good way to clean ribbons? I wear light-blue ribbons a great deal, and wearing them once or twice soils them." Brush the soiled parts only, with refined benzine applied by a nail-brush, rinse in fresh benzine and dry in the shade. Or wash with warm water and fine white castile soap, rinsing and pressing between soft white cloths. (2) "What can I do for my hair, which is very oily. I have tried washing it with soap and water, but it only stays fresh a day or two, and it is such a trouble to dry it." Wash your hair at night, wipe well, comb and shake it loose in a current of air, do it up lightly in a net, and it will give you less trouble. Or bathe your head with weak alcohol, slightly perfumed with Florida water or lavender water; rub it into the roots of the hair with a linen cloth. It will cleanse the scalp, and correct the unpleasant oiliness of the hair. Pussie very shrewdly "hopes everybody will add some court-plaster to their medicine box when they go travelling;" and I join with her in thinking it very good.

X.

JESSIE B. C. doesn't like oatmeal, and her mother wishes directions for making the steamed oatmeal spoken of in the Health articles of *Wide Awake.* Put eight heaping tablespoonfuls of oatmeal to soak over night in one quart of filtered water; next morning set it in a tin boiler over the fire till it boils, then place in a double boiler or kettle half full of boiling water, to finish cooking. Add one heaping teaspoonful of salt while cooking, and keep it boiling twenty minutes at least. Sprinkle cinnamon and sugar over it, or eat with beefsteak as a vegetable. When cold, slice thick and fry on a very hot griddle, with as much butter or suet as for batter-cakes. The "steamed oatmeal" and "steamed wheat" are preparations sold after steaming and drying, but the W. B. does not recommend them.

KITTIEL. W. "Can you tell me a cure for mosquito bites?" Put one teaspoonful of carbolic acid in a quart bottle of pure soft water and you have a lotion for bites of all kinds, "prickly heat," and all irritations of the skin. Bathe the parts affected with the wash till the smarting is over. A quart will last all summer, unless the mosquitoes are very bad. The best authority says lobelia extract rubbed on the bites, and witch-hazel are both good.

EDITH H. Press autumn leaves between six sheets of the softest, coarsest printing paper, under a smooth board and heavy weight. Gather leaves when free from dampness, press as soon as possible, changing to fresh papers each day for a week. They should not look "shiny," but a natural sort of finish is given by brushing when pressed, with thin turpentine varnish in which wax is melted, one ounce of wax to the pint of varnish. Have the varnish in a dish, warm, dip the leaves and hang them to drip into the dish by threads in a warm place. Keep them pressed till you want to use them.

JANIE AND BESSIE. "Please give full directions for making a white curtain or curtains for a window

thirty-four inches wide and sixty-two high. Tell what material and how much should be used, whether one curtain or a pair, and how should the rings be fixed?"

For such a narrow window a single short curtain of cottage muslin forty inches wide, or wider, and falling a foot below the frame. Hem each end, the lower one two and one half inches wide, sew the curtain-rings of the smallest size on the upper hem, and run on a fine brass rod; or, without the rod, draw a two-inch ribbon through the upper casing, full the muslin on it, and tie bows at each end over a picture nail. Such a curtain is to hang before the glass most of the time, and one corner pinned back with a bow in any airy fashion when lifted.

XI.

SUE. "I saw in the WIDE AWAKE Post-Office an interesting letter in which the correspondent says: 'I find it hard to keep from saying I guess.' Will you tell me if it is incorrect to use the word guess?" Yes, as frequently used instead of "I *think*" so and so. To guess means to conjecture, at haphazard more or less, not to give your belief on the best grounds, which you intend generally in saying you guess. You guess when you know nothing at all about a matter; you think so when you have reasons for it.

M. B. "Could you tell me the address of the whole Cabinet, so that I could get their autographs?" Not for any consideration, for, as all well informed people do, I regard the whole business of soliciting autographs as a nuisance and impertinence. The Cabinet of the United States, and all other public men, politi-

cians, authors, divines, are far too busy men to be annoyed by the requests of entire strangers for their autographs. The applications of this kind are one of the worst inflictions public personages suffer, and the Wise Blackbird will have no hand in encouraging a practise in such bad taste. If you can get an autograph in any legitimate way, by exchange or gift, from some one who has a letter from a notable person, take it, but don't make yourself one of the five thousand impertinents who exhaust the time and temper of very busy men by senseless requests they have no business to make. That the practise is so wide among ignorant, unthinking people, does not make it becoming or allowable.

M. A. S. "Where can I get a work on pen and ink drawing suitable for a beginner? I want to take drawing in connection with writing lessons at school this winter." Write to D. T. Ames, of the *Penman's Art Journal*, 205 Broadway, New York, and read *Ruskin's Notes on Drawing*. You did not say whether you wanted to learn merely to do ornamental flourishing, or to make pen and ink sketches, but the works above will guide you.

A. B. C. 1. "Why are stories of events which occurred before Magna Charta was dreamed of, called Magna Charta stories?" Because they all belong to the same noble history of struggles of various nations for their liberties, of which Magna Charta was the greatest victory.

2. "In speaking of collections, you advise for one a collection of engravings, good, bad and indifferent. Of what use, of what value, are the bad and indifferent ones?" Juvenile collections are generally made for the sake of illustrating a country, class of persons, or a period. A boy will gather pictures of public men, of presidents, explorers, kings or philosophers, or he will collect as many of public buildings, ships or machinery, as he can find, or scenes in foreign countries or in separate States of his own land. In such collections a scrap which is a very poor engraving in itself may be interesting to fill the gap in a series, or as giving an idea of some place or personage. I certainly would not advise you to save a poor picture when you could get a better. But in a series of New Hampshire scenery, or summer resorts, even such ordinary scraps as you send would be useful.

3. "In a certain picture, why is the young man rowing his boat stern first — because he has so heavy a load in the bow?" No; in such a case, any school-boy who uses oars knows a boat would row twice as hard stern first. The rower is probably backing out from some narrow passage or channel.

J. A. R. "What is the use of a two dollar postage stamp?" When such a stamp is used, it is on large bundles of newspapers sent to the same office, which are prepaid by publishers.

EMELINE P. 1. "An early number of WIDE AWAKE with its article on John Ruskin, deeply interested me in his works. Will you kindly give me their titles, and tell me which are best suited for a little girl of sixteen, also where I can get the cheapest editions, and about what I must expect to pay for them?"

The works by which Mr. Ruskin became known were his *Modern Painters* in seven volumes, which it will be time enough for you to read four years from now. Beside his *Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *Stones of Venice* he has written many later books which treat less of art than of men's duties to each other, duties of rich men, working men, women and children,

books with arresting, significant titles: *Fors Clavigera*, *Ethics of the Dust*, *A Crown of Wild Olives* and others. For the present you will find most benefit in his *Notes on Drawing*, a thin volume which will teach you much about nature and methods of work, though you know and care nothing for art, and in *Sesame and Lilies*, which has beautiful counsel for girls. Read these slowly, learn passages by heart, write things which please you in a blank book; keep them by you to read a passage now and then, and they will do you more good than to sit down to read the entire series of Ruskin's Works in twenty-six volumes. Buy the English editions of the volumes you want at a good second-hand bookstore, where unused books can always be bought at reduced prices. You should get both works recommended for $2.50 in all.

2. "Which is the best college for girls?" Home, by all means, if you are in reach of fairly good teachers, as from your address you must be. The most highly educated women of to-day were not trained in colleges, but by private teachers, under the eye of sagacious mothers and fathers. The finest ladies in society do not send their daughters away from home

to the mixed companionship of large boarding-schools and the independence of girls' colleges, but have them trained at home by careful governesses and masters, or in private schools where they are at home daily. Boarding-schools and colleges are for those who lack home advantages.

3. "When should I begin singing lessons?" A child should begin to sing carefully and properly as soon as it can sing at all. You cannot begin too soon, and have lost much time already.

4. "Is it proper to take a gentleman's arm in day-time?" Not unless you are too much an invalid to walk easily alone, or there is a dense crowd to pass through in which you are in danger of being separated. These are the only cases when it is necessary, and therefore the only ones where it is allowable to take the arm of an escort by day.

5. "What books should I read to best mould my character?" There are a few books I would advise every girl to read once a year. One is *The Intellectual Life*, by Philip Gilbert Hamerton; another is *Vilette*, by Charlotte Bronté; a third is that lovely old-fashioned, plain-speaking, but most high-minded and

lady-like of all books, *The Listener*, by Caroline Opie. Read Miss Edgeworth's novels; get the *Life of Mrs. Delany* to learn what an accomplished woman of the last century could be, and then read that incomparable memoir of Mrs. Susan Ripley, George Ripley's mother, who used to hear schoolboys' lessons in logic and Latin while shelling peas under the shade of the elms on the grass. Miss Martineau's *Autobiography*, and the *Journal of Caroline Fox* lately issued, will be good books for you. Also read works of real adventure and of practical art like house furnishing, embroidery and decoration. Study the best works on decorative art, Mrs. Bury Palliser's *Book of Lace*, and learn to tell the different laces accurately; take Prime's *Pottery and Porcelain*, and learn the "marks" of china; study botany, gardening, visit hot houses and learn to tell the orchids apart, and the ferns. Tell the truth, do your duty, and quit thinking intensely of yourself and how to mould your own character. Charles Kingsley says of one of his noblest heroes that "he never thought about thinking, or felt about feeling," and that the narrowness of his information was counterbalanced by the depth and

breadth and healthiness of his Education. There is something for you to take to heart, and not only you, but many like you, who are fidgety about the cubits of their mental stature. Neither much reading or study or meditation will ever mould brains or character without ten times as much doing something useful and skilful with all your heart and all your ability.

G. McC. 1. "I should like to know how to make a lawn look pretty. I think it would be nice to have little paths running through the grass." No; little paths, which good gardeners will tell you, give a cut-up look to grounds. A lawn or grass plot should be a sheet of beautiful, short, velvety green, with a wide path and shrubbery or flower-beds on its borders. Fine grass, as all artists will tell you, is one of the most beautiful things in nature; more refreshing than flowers, or landscapes without it. Grass should be well fertilized each fall, and fresh seed sown on bare places when it has been trodden or burnt out by the sun. Through summer it is to be cut with a lawn mower and sickle once in ten days, and sprinkled evenings in dry weather to keep it fresh. Frequent wetting makes the thick sward we love to see. Sow

white clover and vernal grass with other lawn grass, the clover for the pearly embroidery of its white blossoms, most beautiful with the fresh green — the vernal grass for its fragrance in spring and fall. In shady corners plant roots of bluebells, lilies of the valley, violets, and the lovely Star of Bethlehem, which will run in the grass and make sweet surprises of bloom. Let the daisies too, flourish by the fence, and near trees, for their foamy white against the foliage cannot be spared, and the gardeners in large parks plant them out in wide clumps for graceful effect.

2. "I want to ask what you have to do when you belong to the C. Y. F. R. U." Send three three-cent stamps to the Recording Secretary, Miss Kate Kimball, Plainfield, N. J., and you will receive the circular explaining the work of the Union. It designs to join people all over the country in a course of regular reading which will give them entertainment and information on a variety of subjects, and will lead them to read and study other books. Some people will study with more interest when they feel that a great many others are studying with them.

I am very glad to see that correspondents have so

quickly taken the sense of my request, and no longer fill their first pages with apologies for sending questions. Here is a rule of good breeding and policy: never make an apology unless the occasion obliges you to.

XII.

ALICE H. "In reading Macaulay's *Essay on Frederic the Great*, I came across this sentence—'The Princess Wilhelmina was treated almost as badly as Mrs. Brownrigg's apprentices;' and in the *Essay on Bunyan*, Mrs. Brownrigg is again mentioned. I was unable to find her name in the dictionary, so I decided to ask about this mysterious lady." Mrs. Elizabeth Brownrigg's history appears in the *Book of Remarkable Trials and Notorious Characters* published in London. She was the wife of a plumber, who opened a sort of private hospital and applied to the Foundling Hospital for girls to be apprenticed for servants, whom she treated with the greatest cruelty. She would whip them over two chairs till she wearied herself with the punishment, and then threw water over them. An apprentice, Mary Clifford, was tied and beaten with a horsewhip or cane, sent to sleep on a

mat in the coal-hole, and often locked up without food. She was so cruelly treated that the neighbors interfered, and found her almost senseless from a brutal whipping which caused her death in a few days. Mrs. Brownrigg was tried and hung for the murder. It is remarkable that this atrocious woman showed great affection and even tenderness for her husband and son, though so hard of heart toward others.

EDITH J. "Can you tell me how to keep the oil from running down the outside of a lamp? Our lamps are always oily, and kerosene on your fingers is not as pleasant as it might be." Be careful not to fill the lamp so that the oil comes up in the metal rim, and wipe carefully just before lighting.

FLORA E. M. 1. "Some of my friends and myself have had quite a discussion over the standard dictionary. They say *Worcester*, while I supposed *Webster* bore off the palm. Will you please settle the question for us? *Webster* for spelling, *Worcester* for pronunciation is the general decision about the merits of the two dictionaries.

2. "I have an hour and a half every day for read-

ing. Do you think the time sufficient to warrant me in taking the Chautauqua course, its examinations, etc.?" If you can come fresh and untaxed by other study the time should be sufficient. The Chautauqua course is specially purposed for those who have but a small amount of time to devote to reading.

3. "I would like to read Ruskin's works. What should I, a girl of sixteen, read first, and where can I get cheap editions?" Mr. Ruskin's small book on *Drawing* will be as good a beginning for you as any, even if you are nothing of an artist, as it leads one to observe nature minutely and intelligently. You might follow this with *Sesame and Lilies*, which contains his first advice to women. You will get the meaning of Ruskin best by reading his books slowly, a few pages at a time, with a note-book at hand to which you may transfer striking passages. The mere act of copying will assist to fix them in the memory. You will find the cheapest editions by inquiring at any large city bookstore, but you will enjoy reading the fine illustrated English copies from the public libraries. Always read a good author in the best edition within reach.

4. "I oftentimes write stories; now if I should send one to you would you judge it truly and honestly without reference to my age, and tell me whether or no I should keep on writing? My indelible pencil is *horrid!* which accounts for my writing." If the story was not a very long one, I would read and criticise it for you, but the process might not be a pleasant one. It is not good form to write letters to any one with pencil, especially on the cover of a book whose embossing makes the writing still more blurred and trying to the eyes which read it.

Dulcis sedecim. "Please tell me who Tam O'Shanter was?" He was the hero of an old Ayrshire story, which tells that a man riding home very late from Ayr one stormy night, seeing a light in Alloway Kirk, a lonesome wayside church, was curious to look in, and saw a dance of witches with the fiend playing the fiddle for them. Tam was moved to an unwary exclamation at the sight, when the lights instantly vanished, and the whole assembly started in pursuit of him on his good gray mare. He rode fast for the nearest bridge, the belief being that neither witch nor evil spirit can cross running water. Fast as he flew,

the witches gained upon him, till just as he reached the keystone of the bridge the foremost and fleetest witch laid hold of his horse's tail. But Meg was stanch, and bore her master safely home with the loss of her own gray tail. So runs the story of which Burns made a poem to illustrate a drawing of Alloway Kirk, in a Scotch volume.

XIII.

HARRY W. "Would you please tell me how transfer pictures are made, and a good way to transfer them?" "Will I," you mean to ask, Harry boy. Can't you find the rule in your grammar which tells when to use the will or the would? I wonder if Harry will make a paper-weight such as a boy once decorated in transfer and sent me as a Christmas gift years ago? His mamma or his teacher would like it, I imagine. The picture for transferring must be on good, firm paper, and sheets of them come on purpose for the work. Lay the print in cold water five minutes, then leave it to drain smoothly in the folds of a clean cotton cloth — an old sheet or pillow case is best, for it absorbs the water. When damp, that is, in about ten minutes, cover the face of the picture with nice mucilage, made from strong gum tragacanth, clear white of eggs, rock moss, or gelatine, lay it face

down on the surface to which you want to transfer it. Press out all blisters, and wipe away smears, then let it dry. After this, wet the back by laying a cold wet cloth on it a few minutes and carefully peel the white paper away by rubbing with your finger till the print begins to show through. This is nice work, for it is easy to peel all away and make a hole which ruins the picture. If well done, the picture shows every line with a white film over it, which disappears by varnishing with clear white transfer varnish, or beaten white of egg. It is well for boys to try such work, for it teaches them to be nice and particular.

SUBSCRIBER. "I have been chosen secretary of a literary society. Strictly, what are the duties of the office? Is it in order to report beside business transactions all items of interest of an informal character connected with the society, particularly when such report will give life and spice to the meeting?"

The duty of a secretary is to take minutes of all the proceedings at each meeting, and enter them as briefly as possible in the record which is read at the next meeting. Any letters on business of the society naturally fall to him for answer, unless there is a corre-

sponding secretary. It depends on the amount of interest before the meeting, whether lively reports would be acceptable or not. Generally, anything to add life and spice is welcome, but the limits of good taste should be closely observed by an officer of the society, and he should be sparing of personalities. Begin in a modest way, make brief reports, and lend your efforts to make other exercises interesting.

XIV.

L. R. B. wants something that will sell well for a little missionary society which is tired of making iron holders and sweeping caps. Try knitting wristlets of garnet wool finished with crimson, for ladies to wear in winter instead of cuffs, and cotton flannel mittens for housekeepers. Patchwork in tiny blocks an inch and a half square, of fine cambric and percale is pretty. Flannel chest protectors are easily made, as they have only to be cut out and bound. But if you want to do genuinely useful and profitable work, learn to knit new heels, toes and knees to children's warm stockings, and make a specialty of it for busy mothers. Did you ever try fitting on thinking caps?

ETHEL. — "Please tell us what kind of paste a Professor of Pasting uses. Also how to make a paste that will keep without moulding." The best paste for common use is boiled flour paste with a half-tea-

spoonful of carbolic acid and ten drops of oil of cloves to the pint.

KATE E. H. — "I have grown so thin the past year that I feel very badly about it. Will you tell the very best things I can eat to gain flesh?" Plumpness depends on many things beside eating. Sleep, for instance, has much to do with freshness and fleshiness. A girl in her teens who goes to parties three times a week, lives in an ill-ventilated schoolroom or sitting-room, and is fond of excitement, is certain to grow thin. Sleep all you can; it is evident you need it. From half-past nine at night to six in the morning is not at all too much for young, growing girls, especially if they lead active lives. Take warm baths at night, sit in the sun, and walk in the open air. Eat cracked wheat and cream or beef gravy for breakfast, with juicy steak, and use the wheat as a part of each meal, as a vegetable with meats at dinner, with fruit and milk at supper. Take a dose fifteen minutes before each meal of the juice of an orange with one tablespoonful of pure olive or salad oil; and, if liked, one teaspoonful of honey. Eat dates and figs in plenty. Turkish women fatten themselves on a paste

of dates, almonds and milk. Use no white bread, and little cake or pastry, and see of what form you are in three months.

Dot. — "I will be fifteen years old the coming January. The following August I have been invited to go with a party of friends to California. I do not know by what route they go. Please tell me what I can read between now and then that will make the trip by either route (starting from Cleveland) profitable and pleasant." Read *The Santa Fé Trail*, by Dr. Hayes, *Colorado Days*, by Helen Hunt Jackson, *My First Vacation*, by Mrs. Caroline H. Dall, and *Knocking Around the Rockies*, by Ernest Ingersoll. *The Round Trip*, by Capt. John Codman, will tell you more about California than any other book except Herr Nordhoff's *California*. Mrs. Dall's book and Mrs. Jackson's give very fair ideas of the country and society you will meet.

Frank E. S. — "Please tell me how I can strengthen my ankles so that I can skate. I can run as fast as any boy, but when I go to skate my ankles turn." The ankle is apt to turn till one grows used to skating, but if yours really are weak, as hap-

pens with growing boys, you can strengthen them by bathing every night with cold water, and rubbing well; by a lotion of a tablespoonful of rock salt, dissolved in a teacup of alcohol; by anointing with deer fat, and rubbing in well; and by using vasaline on them at night. Have high shoes which button snugly round the ankle and support it. And let me know in time if any of these remedies help you.

BESSIE M. 1. "Please give me directions for using odds and ends of single zephyr worsted. I would rather work on canvas." Work lozenges or diamonds of different colors in the cross-stitch now fashionable, dividing them with stitched lines of black, white or gold silk. Make shaded, tufted "daisy mats." Those who do much fancy work find it best to save odd skeins of worsted, which come in use occasionally when the supply runs short.

2. "Please tell me a nice society object for girls from thirteen to sixteen. Something that is *fun* and interesting." Try a work-society to learn different fancy stitches, the object of which will be to provide each girl with a full set of pretty things for her own room, or make up tidies, mats, brush-holders

and such articles for some teacher or busy woman who cannot do the work for herself. Make *help* the object, and the fun will come of itself.

3. *Which* game of "Pi" do you inquire about? The common one is played by selecting the cardboard letters which spell a word, mixing them and passing to another person who finds the word without telling. It is also called Word-making.

NEWARK wants the address of an author who "writes such nice fairy stories." Once again, I repeat that any author of any magazine may be reached by sending a letter to the person, in care of the publishers or editors. But young readers may remember that writers in general are very busy people, and reflect well whether it is worth while to take up a busy man's time to read and answer letters, written because some juvenile admirer did not know what else to do with his idle hours.

DOT AVONDALE. 1. "Will you tell me a few books interesting as well as instructive for a girl of fifteen to read." Try Maria Edgeworth's novels, and Jane Austen's. Miss Mitford's *Our Village*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Crawford*, the first part of Miss Mar-

tineau's Autobiography, Good's *Book of Nature*, Shirley Hibberd's *Book of Wild Flowers*, and *British Sea Mosses*, if you have any taste for natural things.

2. "Do you prefer the angular or round hand for a lady to write?" The angular English hand has been considered the fashionable style for many years, and it is easier to adopt than the Italian or round hand which all ladies were taught till the last twenty-five years. A plain handwriting easily read is the distinguishing mark of a lady's correspondence.

XV.

NELLIE. "Please mention something nice for our papa's and uncle's Christmas presents. They do not smoke, so we cannot make anything for their cigars; they have slippers, and they use fountain pens and do not need penwipers, and we do not know what to give them." As pretty a present, then, as you could wish, is a slipper case, like a deep wall-pocket, to hang on a closet door. This is a nice present for a gentleman, especially if worked or painted on satin with frame of carved wood, and draped with silk cord and Turkish tassels. A blotting case of fine dark linen, with large leaves of blotting paper is useful; a calendar in large type to stand or hang over the desk, a note book with calendar, rates of postage, hours of high and low tide and such friendly hints are very welcome; a whisk broom with plush pocket and tassels, a ball of

office cord in a little satin bag, or a fancy box for postage stamps, a case of court plaster, even sachets for scenting handkerchiefs, and watch pockets or stands, ornamented with chenille, tinsel and satin bows.

LITTLE SISTER. "Will you please tell me how to make a bag for skates?" Make a square bag of baize or thick flannel, stitched in the middle to make a pocket for each skate, the bag to close with drawing strings of woollen braid. The initials of the owner are worked in bright colors on the side of the bag, which may be ornamented further with herring-bone border in bright silks, or with figures of boys skating.

HATTIE. "I have a pair of nice black gloves that moulded last summer, and they look spotted and dingy. How shall I make them look nice again?" Some glove makers have a preparation for retouching the spots and worn finger tips of black gloves, which makes them jet black and smooth again. Kid blacking has been a great convenience for those who like neat boots a good many years, and glove blacking will be hardly less a boon. You might touch the

spots carefully with the French Dressing sold for nice boots, thinning the polish with a little alcohol first.

JOE. "Wanted, an object for a school society." Why not have an Observers' society, to notice and record all the curious, pleasant and amusing facts which come in your way; not in books, but in real life. You can divide it into sections for recording facts in natural history, in character, in humor, all the members to see what they can bring of interest to the meetings, and each contribution, if worthy, to be set down in the record. Notice when the late or great snowstorms come, when they begin, what hour they leave off, how deep the snow is, measuring the highest drifts, notice when the first spring birds are heard, and the date when the first flowers are found. To compare the seasons year by year, put down the readings of the thermometer on very cold or warm days, mention unusually fine specimens of common plants, and the situation they grew in. If any one knows of a very kind, high-minded or generous thing done by a person of his acquaintance, or an interesting experience, that may go on the record of character.

Any one who hears a good joke or knows a piece of fun may tell it, and the collection of such jokes *may* enrich the volume of American humor, who knows! Only learn to see for yourselves, and notice what goes on about you, not taking everything from books.

XVI.

BOY. "What makes so many white spots on my finger nails? I never saw any one with so many." Impurity and poorness of blood lead to unequal deposits of the horny substance of the nail, which grows cloudy and chalky in spots. You need to pay attention to diet, bathing often and rub yourself briskly with a coarse towel every night before going to bed. I dare say a knowing old lady would dose you with dandelion and herb extracts for clearing the blood. A very old cure for spots on the nails, "liver spots," or those brown patches on the face some people call moth, together with other disorders of the blood and digestion, was to eat raw onions with salt. The practice was sensible, as the onion contains powerful medicinal qualities. An old couplet, older than Shakespeare, advises us to—

Eat leeks in Lent and raisins in May,
And all the year after physicians may play.

If you try the remedy, like an investigating boy, your presence and the effect of the medicine will be improved by always taking a teaspoonful of powdered charcoal mixed in water after each dose.

M. C. "Could you tell me how to take care of goldfishes in a glass globe? We have had a good many but most of them have died." Goldfish need plenty of air and should be kept in a wide-mouthed globe not more than three fourths full of water. They need partial shade, and must be kept out of the sun and away from the fire. The water needs changing once in a week or two, and should have the chill taken off. Do not feed the fish with crumbs of bread as it makes the water sour.

KATE. "What do you think the best things to collect for a scrapbook?" Rather a wide question, Kate, to which I answer, the items most interesting to your own taste. Begin with what you have, say a picture of some town, person, or building of note. Then gather anything you see about the subject, and keep your clippings in a large envelope or drawer by themselves. Don't be in a hurry to fill your scrapbook, but collect five or six weeks or months before arrang-

ing the scraps. You will find much that you don't care for on second reading. Collect all the paragraphs about birds, all about dogs, all the bright jokes and short stories of adventure you find for three months, and tell us if you are not repaid.

XVII.

ALICE H. S. wishes to know how to extract the wax from bayberries as they are plenty near her home and she would like to make candles from them after the old fashion. Not a question received since these conundrums were opened, has given me more trouble or more pleasure to answer, for it shows a bright, happy intelligence ready to observe the stores of nature, to ask their meaning and attempt their use. The Pilgrims and early New England colonists used the wax from the baybushes for making candles, so did the settlers in Northern Ohio, and still do the country people of Louisiana and Arkansas near the coast. Such candles are said to give a beautiful clear, fragrant light. But the art has so died out East that not one of the books gives the process for making them. The bay tallow as it was called was made by heating the berries in plenty of water, boil-

ing slowly, straining and leaving the water to cool, when the wax rose on top. Then it was run in molds, like other candles, perhaps mixed with one third fine beef tallow to make it go farther. With the growing partiality for wax lights it is worth inquiring whether this industry of making bay wax cannot be revived as a limited luxury. It might become as profitable as raising silkworms on our northern coasts. We will all wish Alice good luck with her bay candles, and hope she will have the pleasure of lighting tapers of her own making next Christmas, and that she will be sure and let us hear how she succeeds.

E. F. G. "A class of young girls want work to do for unfortunate people. It is too early in the season for them to send flowers to the 'Flower Mission.' For the meantime, the following has been suggested, viz.: To paste on green cambric quotations from poets and other writers in letters cut from white muslin.

1. "Would not such 'mottoes' relieve the monotony of bare hospital walls?" Certainly, if the quotations are very brief, simple and rich; for passages more than a line or two will weary sick brains, and being short, all the more need to be sweet or stirring

enough to fill the mind with its snatch of thought. The effect will be better *painted* in white with black shading on leaf-green ground; you will find it very difficult to make pasted letters look well.

2. "Would the mottoes be acceptable, and would the express companies carry such packages free of charge?" Such work might be pleasing for convalescent wards. An inquiry at the express office in your town will be more satisfactory than one made here. I judge that the articles not being of any particular value in hospital work, like fruit, flowers or supplies, the exprsse companies would not feel called on to send them free. Why undertake work that must go so far from home to reach its object? Have you no sick families in your own village to whom your attentions and help would be a grateful surprise? How is the poor-house furnished in your township? Would not the decorations and flowers in season be a thousand times more welcome to those who are overlooked by all, and who have forgotten to hope for any notice or pleasure? Hundreds of generous homes near by send their offerings to the city hospitals while the same charities exist in every county to

be aided and encouraged, but how few think of the crushed and hopeless within an hour's drive of their homes? *Have* you a village or even a county hospital, or if there is one, is it a good one? If not, why not turn your talents to starting one, where accidents may be treated with the best appliances, and the sick with chronic diseases find such quiet and care as would be difficult to secure at home. I would suggest making the mottoes and other pretty things for home decoration, and having a pleasant little sale to raise money for couches, invalids' chairs, water beds, spinal corsets, and appliances for distorted limbs, to be lent in the neighborhood to persons needing them who could ill afford to buy such things. There would be a noble work, and worth your efforts — nay, it is one so close to you that it comes within the line of sacred inspiring duty, and any aid or suggestion I can give in such undertakings you may call for, with the greatest freedom.

XVIII.

INQUIRER asks: "What is the height of the picture line?" No precise rule is given, farther than to hang pictures so that the lower half will be opposite the eye, where the whole can be easily viewed without lifting or bending the head. In exhibitions where two or three rows of pictures must be hung to have space for all, naturally the best are hung on this line, and those of less consideration in the rank above or below it.

DORA J. D. "In answer to a query, you told a girl of thirteen she could earn money by raising flowers and seeds. Please tell me where and how these can be sold, and recommend some good practical book, with pictures, if possible, telling about flowers which can be raised in a common garden, and the best method of culture." Vick's *Flower and Vegetable Garden* is probably the book you want, which is mostly

devoted to flowers, and has colored plates as well as many wood cuts. Henderson's *Practical Floriculture* is a delightful book for older cultivators, and will give you a good idea how to sell flowers and what prices to expect. A girl can either raise nice bedding plants like geraniums, verbenas, and choice coleus to sell at her home, or she can send cut flowers like roses, heliotrope, carnations, and violets boxed to the town florist to sell for her.

2. "I can get some kinds of wild flowers here. Could I sell early violets?" Good plants of fine wild flowers, well rooted in baskets with plenty of their native earth, find sale among flower fanciers. I think I should particularly like to buy a fine scarlet lobelia, or white wild honeysuckle, pink orchid or clump of mayflowers ready to blossom, and a good many other people have the same taste. Rooted plants of wild blue and white violets, in small fruit baskets, would sell in spring in city streets, but the plucked wild flowers wither too soon to be profitable. Go to the greenhouse and see how the florist arranges the spring baskets of fern and moss and you will know how fresh and delicate such things should be.

A. BOSTON. 1. "Can you tell me two or three pretty trios for young ladies to sing, something of the ballad style? The voices are first soprano, second soprano and alto." Tilden's *Trios for Female Voices*, published by Ditson & Co., may have what you want. In *Pan Pipes*, a book of old songs newly arranged by Theodore Marzials, the English song writer, you will find several things which with some knowledge of music you can arrange for three voices. Hullah's *Part Songs* and the old singing books of the time of Lowell Mason and George James Webb have such songs as you want in the best taste.

2. "Can you tell me of some vine which grows very fast and does not need rich ground, and not much sun? I want to plant some vines around a summer-house so that it may be covered quite quickly as it is not very handsome in itself." Try a root of ampelopsis or Japanese creeper, which is the fastest growing vine known in this country. The Virginia creeper grows fast and in almost any place, but if you want vines to grow quickly you must give them rich earth, and plenty of water — street scrapings and slops from the house. A root of madeira vine will cover a

large space with its shoots in a single season and will look well with either of the others. Plant something on each of the four sides of your summer house if you want it screened next season.

3. "Does German or English ivy grow fastest, and which is easiest to cultivate? I have heard of an ivy which grew fifty feet in one winter. I should like to have such an ivy as that. Will any sort of ivy grow well without much sun?" The common German ivy of our sitting-rooms grows most successfully in this country, though the dark Irish ivy makes a richer screen in time. The ivy which grew fifty feet in a season was a German one, and was well tended, had plenty of rich soil and water. Ivies like a little old pounded mortar with their earth, and will grow in sun or shade.

PRUE. 1. "I have a pot of carnations, some ivy and pansies in my window. Lately the carnations have been covered with a small green bug. It does not seem to eat the plant, nor does it wither. The other plants are not touched. They are in a window where they have the sun all day. Can you tell me how to get rid of them, or are they doing no harm?"

Insects and plants do not thrive together, as you have probably found by this time. The air is too dry for your plants, and you want to put them in a tub and wash the leaves and stems with a soft brush or chicken wing and plenty of warm soapsuds; then keep a little water in the pot saucers, spray the foliage often, and evaporate water on the stove or in the water-front of your furnace, to make the air of the room healthy for the plants and yourself.

XIX.

JESSIE B. "I want to learn all I can about plants and gardening. What books on the subject do you recommend?" You may begin with *Wood's First Lessons in Botany*, a small book, but the best and most direct introduction to the knowledge of plants for beginners of any age, following with his *Class Book*, then with Professor Gray's works if you choose, which will be as thorough a course in Botany as people usually care to take. For gardening you want Peter Henderson's books, and having those you need nothing beside. There are no others about gardening so plain, full and delightful. Of the three which tell all that the gardener on large or small scale needs to know, *Gardening for Profit*, *Gardening for Pleasure*, and *Practical Floriculture;* you will probably want *Gardening for Pleasure* at first, as it tells about flowers, fruit and vegetables, house plants and out-

door gardens. The *Floriculture* is for florists who wish to grow flowers to sell. The *Gardening for Profit*, for those who keep market gardens, but all as plain for children to understand as if written for them. The *Handbook of Plants*, by the same author, you will want for a book of reference, as it tells you all that is interesting about plants known and grown in America, their botany, habits, uses in medicine or art, their origin, and how to cultivate them. I have gone through a hundred or more books about plants, and find these four all I want for use. You can find much that is delightful about the history, habits and sentiments of flowers in English books. This is a part of the subject unfilled as yet in American writing, except by such graceful works as Miss Harris's *Field, Wood and Meadow Rambles*, and her *Wild Flowers and where They Grow*. But in English works you find several volumes about garden flowers. *British Sea Mosses and Wild Plants*, with well-colored plates, written by Shirley Hibbard, editor of the *English Gardener's Monthly*, beside Mrs. Loudon's books and a score by less known writers who have scanned every nook and hedgerow of England for their favorites. Ask all the questions about

gardening you please, for I desire nothing more than to see you and a host of other American girls learn to love plants intelligently, ardently as Miss Hope Johnstone did, the Scottish gentlewoman who made flowers her life-long pleasure, who wrote about them, studied them, grew them, and thought it charming to go a journey of a hundred miles into a strange country to dig a basket of wild anemones of a rare variety from old castle ruins for her garden borders.

W. H. V. A. 1. "What will prevent hang-nails!" After washing and wiping the hands, press back the skin around the nails and loosen it with the point of an ivory knife or scissors.

2. "How can one whiten the skin?" Bathe it in warm water with a teaspoonful of chloride of lime to the pint — rinsing with water that is slightly sour with lemon juice, and rubbing with a little vaseline or cold cream. If the skin is red and sunburnt, use the cold cream alone.

3. "What will remove freckles?" Hot chloride of lime water, made quite strong, one tablespoonful of chloride to the pint, rinse off with diluted lemon-juice. Use with great care, as the chloride is a

caustic poison. Hot borax water made in the same proportion will sometimes take of the freckles, but must be used patiently, bathing the face ten minutes at a time, and often.

XX.

F. E. F. J. "What is the best rifle, how far will it shoot, and what will it cost? I can't find out much about the first question, as different books say differently." You will find that most advertisements and sportsmen say differently about their favorite weapons. Which is the best rifle depends on what you want it for. Hunting requires a much lighter one than target practice, for which you must have an arm of long range, and very accurate sights. The best hunting rifle is the Winchester, a light, repeating arm which will throw a dozen shots in nearly as many seconds, from three hundred to five hundred yards. A plain Winchester, with twenty-four-inch barrel, either thirty-eight or forty-four calibre, can be had for twenty dollars. Most of the shooting on target ranges is done with military rifles, or with high-priced guns of long range and very fine sights. The New York

State arm adapted to seventeen-hundred-yard shooting, which costs from fifty to one hundred dollars, is the Remington, the Massachusetts' the Springfield rifle, but these are government arms and not for sale. For general use, hunting and short range target practice of from three to four hundred yards, the Remington sporting rifle is probably the most useful one you can have. The longest range military rifle is the Martini-Henry rifle, made by the Providence Tool Company, and with which the Turks did such execution in the Balkans. Under its fire the Russian soldiers fell at a distance of a mile and a half.

T. K. "Can you tell me a way to keep rats out of a chicken coop next to a barn? I am afraid to use poison and they will not go into a trap." The rats will not go near your trap because it smells of those which have been caught in it. Soak it two days in water with a little potash; then let it stand without setting the spring for three or four days tilted near the rat-hole, baited, till the rats are used to it. Then set it with ham or cheese, soaking it every time a rat is caught to take the scent out. Strew poison in their runs under the barn, leaving a small tub of water

near for them to drink and drown in. A poisoned rat starts for the water at once. Or gather the wild hound's-tongue or dog's-tongue that grows in waste pastures, a plant of rank odor, and near relation of the weed "beggar's-lice," and strew it bruised around the coop. It is said to keep rats away. A hunter advises you to get some skunk's scent and rub around the barn, when the rats will leave in a body. But I fear your chickens would all be gone before you could get the prescription filled. Try bruised wormwood and garlic about the coop. Vermin dislike these plants and poultry like them.

XXI.

ETHEL S. "Please tell me how to clean bronzes. My sister has a pair of bronze statues with ebony bases, and while she was in New Orleans the chamber-maid put a piece of cocoa butter on one of them, not knowing that it would soil it, and she also wiped it off with a wet cloth." If the articles are really bronze, take the grease out with magnesia, or weak soda water, and a sponge, rinsing with beer; then restore the color with bronze powder of the right shade, which you will find at a metal worker and burnisher's, or at a large paint dealer's. If the articles are imitation bronze, touch the spot with alcohol or wipe with yolk of egg, and apply bronze powder.

MAGGIE. "Will horse hairs kept in water become snakes?" No; a small snake closely resembling a hair, with no head or tail to be seen without a magnifying glass, is found in streams and springs, and has

raised the belief that it sprang from a hair, which in some mysterious way became vivified.

QUIZ. "What will prevent the skin from growing tight to the base of the finger nails? In trying to loosen it, I make it rough and homely and sometimes make a rough place in the nail, which is a long time going off. If I let it be, it cracks at the side and is sore." Cut the ragged skin away with sharp, fine scissors, and rub the nails and finger joints with vaseline or olive oil, before going to bed. Repeat every night and morning till healed, then daily in drying the hands, press the skin from the base of the nails with the forefinger nail or a tiny ivory knife for the purpose. The cracking and soreness shows an irritable condition of the blood; using the vaseline will soon improve the nails. You can remove roughness by polishing them with fine emery and nail powder.

GERTIE M. 1. Use cretonne of warm, dark colors, lined with red or olive silesia for winter window curtains to your bedroom. I cannot recommend the cotton flannel so much used, as it fades badly. The deep, all red German damask used for tablecloths is

much liked for draperies, as it washes and lasts better than anything else.

2. The simplest decorations for cake are the prettiest; a beading of pearly sugar plums on edge. Guipure lace patterns are pencilled on the plain frosting and followed with a tracery of lines of frosting pressed from a paper horn filled with the mixture, or put on with a confectioner's syringe. White leaves and ornaments are sold by fancy bakers for decorating cake, and can be used more than once, as they are not to be eaten. A cluster of phantom leaves is very pretty on cake, or bunches of white currants crystallized. Crescents of lemon and orange peel dipped in frosting, or coral sprays in rough sugar seeds, which are ea nt ararg osye.

A. B. C. 1. Cherryburn is a pretty name for a place with a spring and a cherry orchard. Summerside and Summerest are names given to cherry orchard homes.

2. You can become a good conversationalist only by having plenty to talk about. Lay up all the interesting, droll and kindly things you read and hear, think before you meet people what you can say to

them that will be kind or pleasant, and practice, by being just as entertaining as you know how to any and every person you talk to.

3. The sulphate of quinine ointment sold by druggists is recommended to make eyelashes grow.

XXII.

SALLIE can be rid of the large hair mole which troubles her, by the new process in which fine needles connected with a battery pierce to the root of each hair, and a weak current of electricity destroys it. But the operation can only be performed by an expert surgeon, and the price of such a cure is high. Fifty dollars is the price for removing a slight penciling of hair from a lady's upper lip.

H. P. X., who wants to grow thin without pinching herself, is advised to get Banting's Letter on Corpulence, which any bookseller can procure for twenty-five cents, and study it. Hot baths twice a week, frequent change of clothing next the skin, plenty of out-door exercise and plain food, mostly of hard bread and dry meats, without milk, sugar or potatoes, will reduce superfluous flesh in most cases.

2. "Where can one get fans mounted on sticks,

and how much will it cost?" Any dealer in fancy goods can direct you to some one who mounts fans. The price depends on the delicacy of the mount; a chintz fan can be mounted for one dollar, a lace one will cost ten dollars, where the material is sent with the order.

IDA T. wants to know what she can make in the shape of something ornamental for the room of a gentleman who is already furnished with a whisk broom holder, slipper case and shaving paper case, lambrequin, pin cushion and mats for his bureau. Embroider a large square of dark bronze or terra cotta felt, for a writing mat to lay on the table; work the stripe for back of a Turkish chair, or decorate a match set, with sandpaper and refuse box; work or paint a box for postage stamps; braid a mat for the bedside; embroider a two inch band of satin for the heading of a photograph frame. Embroidered blotting cases, collar boxes, cravat boxes, calendar frames, pen racks and handkerchief sachets remain to be furnished this destitute friend. A splasher for the wall above the washstand, would be most acceptable, made of white enameled cloth or rubber cloth, bound

and decorated in color to suit the rest of the room. I have one parting hint for Ida and others, never to use that crowning vulgarity of expression "lady friend" or "gentleman friend," which is heard only from the lowest or most careless speakers. Say a friend of mine, and let the pronoun following decide the sex, or simply say, a gentleman, or a lady, and do not parade the fact of friendship. As a knowing collegian of the sort whose opinion would have weight with schoolgirls remarks: "If there is anything sappy and girly-girly, it is to hear a 'teener' talk about her 'gen'l'm friend,' and I always expect to find her chewing gum into the bargain." With its burden of truth and horrible slang I leave to make its deep impression where needed.

Joy L. C. and others whose hair falls out and collects dandruff are advised to wash the head with carbolic soap or borax and *hot* water, weekly, rinsing and drying the hair well before putting it up. Brush it daily for ten minutes.

XXIII.

EVA S. L. is very anxious to learn to skate, but her ankles are so weak that they turn when she attempts to strike out, a defect of which others have complained to the department. Bathe the ankles and the lower part of the spine in very warm water till redness appears, then sponge with cold and rub briskly. Rubbing with deer's fat, bathing with strong salt water, and stroking the calf of the leg and the ankles are recommended to make them strong. It takes a good walker to make a good skater, and there is nothing like due exercise to give sound, steely muscles, fit for any sort of work.

A SUBSCRIBER. Purple ink is made by dissolving a few grains of aniline violet in boiling water till the right depth of color is secured. For the blue ink which turns to black, dissolve the iron salt mentioned in the sulphate of indigo, grain by grain, with the

purest soft water, filtered or distilled if you can get it, till the ink is right for use. Let it stand three days before you decide on its quality.

JESSIE JESSEL has read and taken the advice to prevent colds by exposing the body to the air, and not making the skin tender by dressing in warm clothing. Of course it gave her a worse cold than ever. If she learns not to believe everything she reads, the wisdom may be well earned at the price of a heavy cold. However, this trying experiments on one's health is too dangerous for young people, who easily do themselves a mischief from which their systems never recover. What are our feelings given us for, if not for guides as to what is safe and desirable, or not? The effect of cold is to depress vitality and, though the reaction may leave one warmer and stronger than before, yet it is at the cost of vital force which many constitutions cannot afford to lose. The exposure which may be pleasant to a strong man or warm-blooded youth will ruin the health of a girl or a slender boy. The best way to cure and avoid colds is to keep warm, and never to suffer a chill on the surface of the body. It is not the warmth of the

air we live in which causes colds, but its impurity and lack of moisture.

JOHNNIE and others demand as usual a skate-bag model, and I am happy to give the directions for an excellent one, made for a Boston boy's holiday present. It is of bronze-green flannel, fourteen inches by thirty-two, lined two thirds of its length with chamois leather, and strongly stitched and bound to form a pocket twelve inches deep, with flap ten inches, lined with gray twilled linen, buttoning squarely over the front with five round gilt buttons, below which on the edge are five gilt miniature sleigh bells jingling as the owner hies along. A leather strap like that of a courier's bag goes over one shoulder, and a large spray of golden rod embroidered on the flap completes what you will allow is a dashing style of skate-bag.

A. R. and B. B. "Please tell two girls how to put up simple gymnastic apparatus in a barn?" The best gymnastic aid known is the pair of handles fixed to a stout rubber rope fastened to the wall, by which one can swing, twist from head to heel, hand over hand, and gain the most perfect suppleness of

every limb without danger of strains or falls. But the price of this gymnastic pull is five dollars, and something at less cost will be acceptable to most persons. A new inch rope fastened to a high cross-beam with handle of turned hard wood attached by the middle to the lower end of the rope, swinging the height of one's head, will afford scope for a variety of exercises. A stout new clothes line ten feet long, fastened by the middle to a hook in the wall, with skipping-rope handles at each end, allows of many twisting exercises which tend to suppleness of joints. A rope thrown over a beam with a weight at one end and handles at the other to pull by, gives many a good tug to strengthen the muscles. A strong oak bar fixed across a door-frame, one foot higher than you can reach standing, will answer for the feat young gymnasts are anxious to perform, of hanging their whole weight by their hands. Slots for bars may be fixed at different distances opposite each other in the sides of the door-frame, or holes may be bored for bars which answer for ladder feats, or swinging at arm's length. All ropes must be sound and strong, all handles of hard wood, round and smooth to the grasp,

and not too large for the hands which are to use it, to prevent dangerous accidents.

HAN. "What will remove scars caused by small boils? I have tried internal and external remedies without effect." Try (1) a square of flesh-colored court-plaster an inch larger than the scar, worn for weeks, applying a new one as fast as the first piece comes off; (2) a paste of bean flower and white of egg, left to dry on over night, continued indefinitely; (3) is an old recipe which melts one tablespoonful of the finest turpentine (not spirits of turpentine), the same of spermaceti, and twice as much olive oil together in a cup over a slow fire till it begins to boil. Let it stand three days and rub gently on the face. Its use will cause marks of eruptions to disappear if not very deep. 4, consult a good physician.

XXIV.

C. O. "I am secretary of a history club of twenty members, and would like to know strictly what are the duties of president and of secretary." The president in a little society of this kind, should merely act the part of host or hostess at any evening party, to see that things go off well. He or she mentions the recitations or readings, gets people's attention, and secures quiet when the real business of the evening is to begin. The less formality and the more friendliness with which this can be done, the more grace and credit to the occasion. The whole duty of these society officers is summed up in these words, to see that things go off well. There must be some record kept of things for future reference, and this duty falls to the secretary, who keeps count of the members to see whether any failure of interest is visible. The secretary also reads the

papers presented by persons who do not care to read their own, writes and answers all letters on business of the society. The president also studies how to keep up the interest of the meetings by quiet suggestions to individual members outside the regular evenings, by inviting new people, hunting up new topics, in consultation with the secretary. Nothing is better worth the interest of such societies than local history of their own towns and neighborhoods taken systematically. Lists of the first settlers should be correctly made, and their property identified, and the traditions, which cluster in the dullest village, should be gathered and verified. Then every town has its special happenings which deserve to be remembered for the sake of science and general history — like that anniversary ball in winter, at Kenniston, N. H., a few years since, when windows being opened to ventilate the ball-room during supper, the cold precipitated the vapor in flakes, and the dancers returning opened the doors on a white snow storm whirling in the room, while the sky was clear as steel and the air serenely, profoundly cold without, many degrees below zero. Such a happening of a most

curious and beautiful fact of scientific interest should be treasured in every detail. Other towns have such wonderful deliverances to tell of as that of the young lady who fell over a cliff thirty feet high, near Ithaca, N. Y., and was buoyed up by her skirts so that she reached the ground in safety. Such things deserve record, and not to be trusted to failing memories and hearsay. How many societies deep in Chaucer or Elizabethan history have yet failed to notice or make any exact observations and account of the wonderful sunsets and sunrises of the winter past! How many have even read the still more wonderful record of the year 1883, memorable for its overwhelming convulsions of nature. Study facts as well as books.

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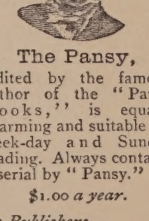

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"Good night," answered she, "come back in the morn,
And you and your chicks shall have more."

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There's a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree,
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